REMARKS

In an office action dated 23 October 2003, the Examiner objects to the drawings and specification. The Examiner also rejects claims 1-7 (all pending claims). In response to the office action, Applicants amend the drawings, specification, and claims 1 and 7. Applicants also respectfully traverse the rejections of claims 1-7 (all pending claims). Claims 1-7 (all pending claims) remain in the application. In light of the arguments set forth below, Applicants respectfully request that all objections and rejections be removed and the application be allowed.

Applicants have amended the title to better capture the claimed invention by including the automatic transfer of revision information. The Applicants have also amended the abstract to state that the transfer of revision information from the slave device to the master device is automatic.

Applicants have also provided red-lined corrections to the drawings to overcome the objections by the Examiner. Formal drawings will be submitted when the application is allowed.

The Examiner rejects claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,442,446 issued to Nakamura et al (Nakamura) in view of U.S. Patent Number 5,179,670 issued to Farmwald et al. (Farmwald).). In order to maintain a rejection the Examiner has the burden of providing evidence of prima facie obviousness. See MPEP §2143. See also In Re Vaeck, 947 F.2d 488, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). In order to prove prima facie obviousness, the Examiner must provide evidence in the prior art of a motivation to combine or modify a reference, a reasonable expectation of success, and a teaching of each and every claimed element. Id.

Amended claim 1 recites a master programmable device and at least one slave device wherein each of the device is either a field programmable gate array or an

erasable programmable logic device. Nakamura does not teach this limitation. Instead, Nakamura teaches machine controllers which execute programs for controlling a semiconductor wafer processing apparatus. (See Col. 3 line 62- Col. 4, line 14) Although it is not explicitly stated, these controllers must be processing units in order to execute programs since the controllers execute programs. Thus, the controllers are different from the master and slave devices in amended claim 1 which are FPGAs which must be configured in a precise manner and have added circuitry to provide the transmission and storage of revision information. Thus, Nakamura does not teach the limitations of the master device and the at least one slave device as recited in amended claim 1.

Farmwald also does not teach the master and slave devices that are either a field programmable gate array or an erasable programmable logic device as recited in claim 1. Farmwald does not mention that a master device receives revision information and stores the information or a slave device that transmits revision information to the master device. Farmwald merely teaches the use of pulses transmitted along a bus and mentions no applications for data being transmitted along the bus. Thus, Farmwald does not teach the master and slave devices recited in amended 1.

Since neither Nakamura nor Farmwald teaches a master or a slave device as reicted in amended claim 1, the combination of Nakamura and Farmwald does not teach the master and slave devices recited in amended claim 1. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be removed and amended claim 1 be allowed.

Claims 2-6 are dependent upon amended claim 1. Therefore, claims 2-6 are allowable as being dependent upon an allowable independent claim. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 2-6 be removed and claims 2-6 be allowed.

Amended claim 7 has been amended to claim the process performed by the system recited in amended claim 1. Thus, the rejection to claim 7 is moot and amended claim 7 is allowable for at least the same reasons as amended claim 1. Therefore. Applicants respectfully request that amended claim 7 be allowed.

If the Examiner has any questions about this response or the claims in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 775-586-9500.

Respectfully submitted,
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